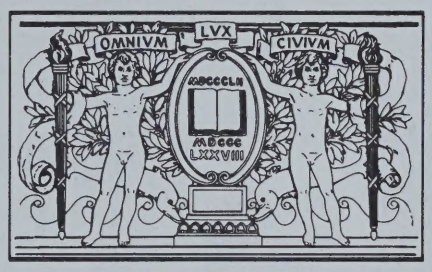
GOVDOC
113/B14
PL
98/1

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 06588 431 2



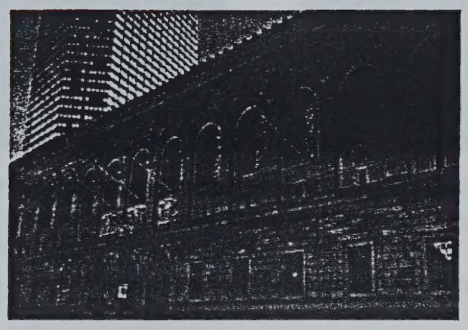
BOSTON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

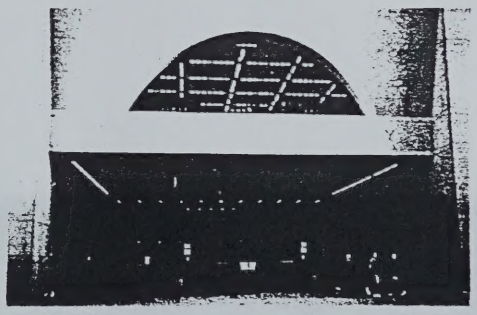
gov. DO-1648

GOVDOC
M3/B16
PL
98/1

Boston Public Library
Central Library Programing and Master Plan

Boston, Massachusetts





Presentation to Capital Development Committee

November 23, 1998

HARDY HOLZMAN PFEIFFER ASSOCIATES

Boston Public Library

Central Library Master Plan

In June, 1998 this consultant team began a master plan study for the Boston Public Library, which focused on the two architecturally distinct buildings of their main branch in Copley Plaza.

Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates

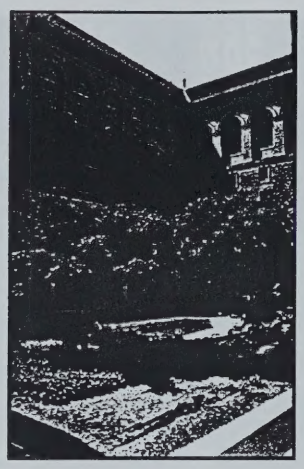
Providence Associates

The team is led by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, architects and planners in collaboration with a team of consultant specialists, the City of Boston Department of Neighborhood Development, and the Boston Public Library.

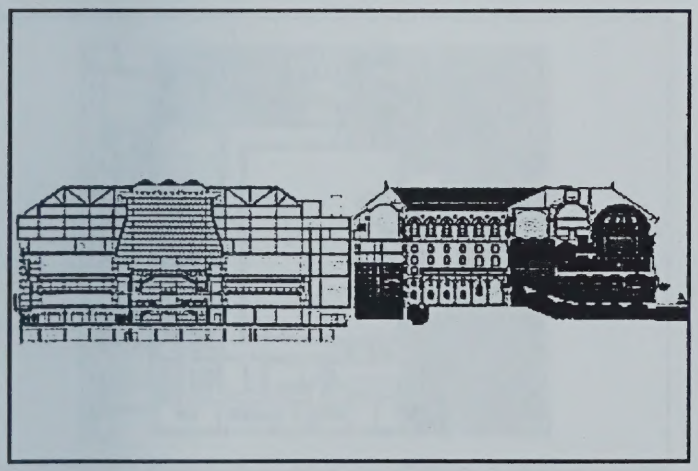
Existing Facility Evaluation: Observation

The following is a series of observations, evaluations, and recommendations evolving from a series of site visits, focus groups, and workshops.

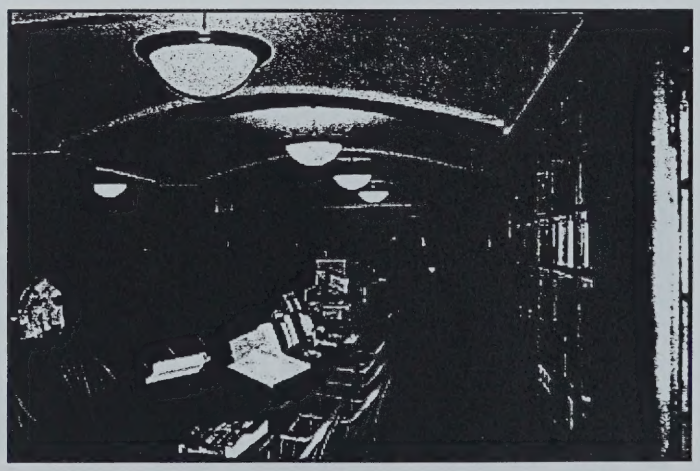
The McKim Building has gone through almost a decade of renovation and change.



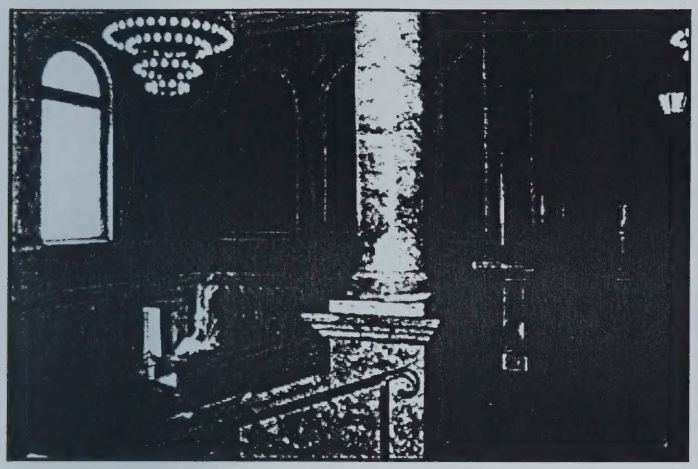
Some areas have been restored to their original state, and others, such as the courtyard, are being adapted to a new vision of the building and library.



The McKim is currently undergoing facelifts and adjustments through a series of phases.

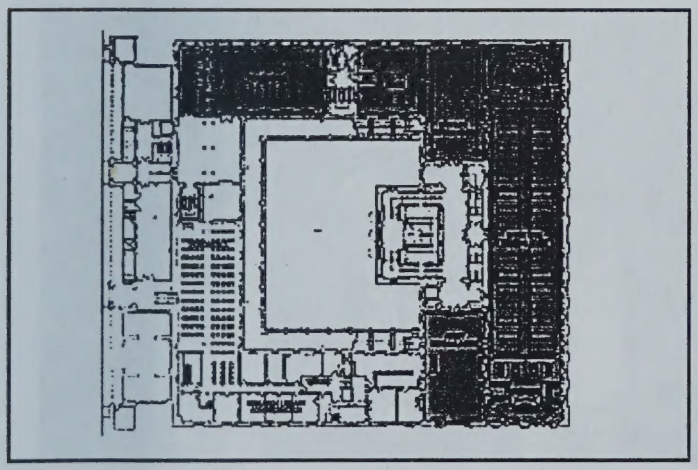


Some renovations have been completed, like the Government Documents room in the basement.

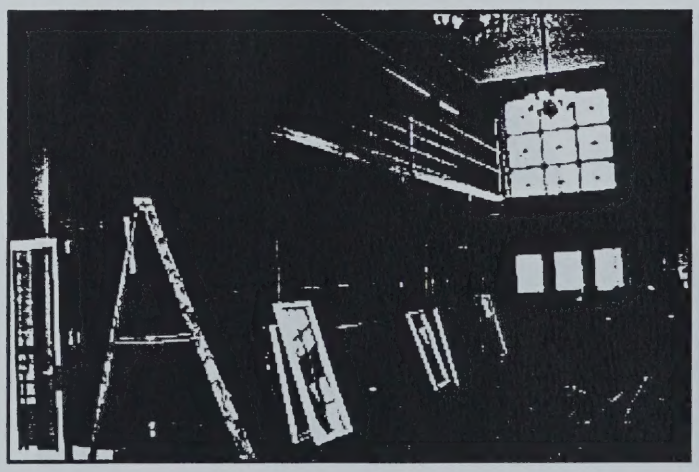


The grandeur of the entry hall has been beautifully restored to its original splendor.

The Bates Reading Hall has been extensively restored, creating a truly inspiring place for study and research.

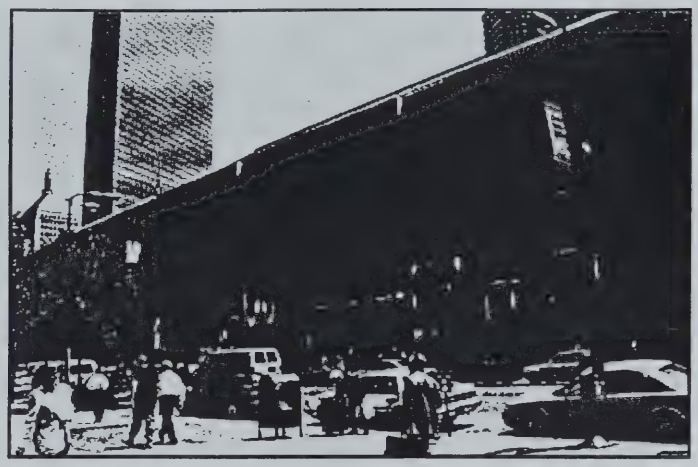


In the case of the Stack 4 floor, practically the entire floor has undergone renovation and restoration.



Other areas, such as the Catalog Information Room, have been renovated to accommodate some of the changing needs of a contemporary library.

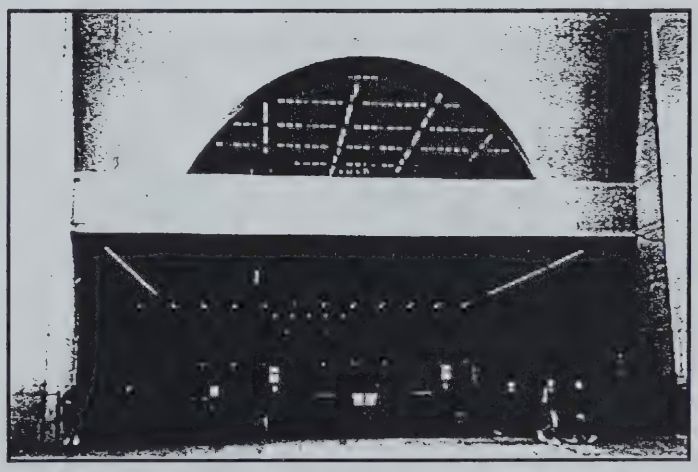
Part of the charge of the study team has been to asses the success of such a transformation, and how it might be expanded and improved upon to better serve the library as whole; incorporating both the McKim and the Johnson Buildings, and perhaps grander vision of the future of the facility.



In order to do this, we have examined the existing facility closely.

Looking at the two buildings, the dichotomy that exists in the current library facility is immediately apparent, both architecturally and programatically.

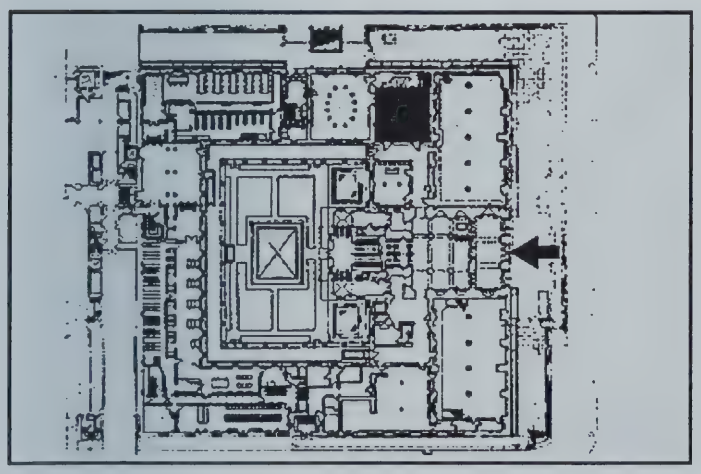
Viewing the front doors of the two buildings one can't help but notice the refined detail of the McKim Mead & White building contrasted by...



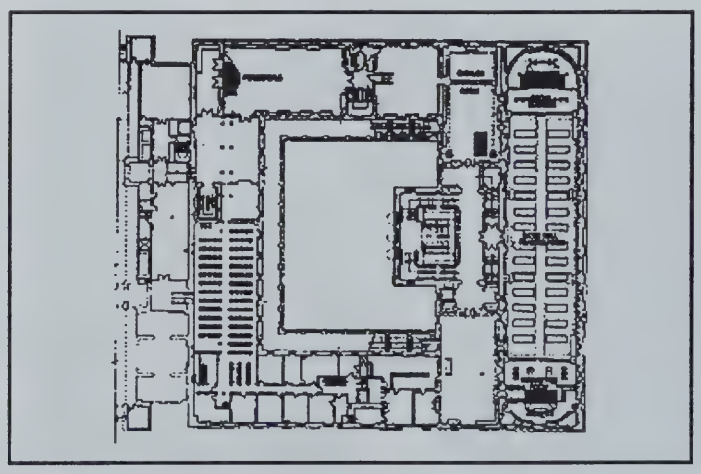
... the clean lines of the modern Phillip Johnson Building.

This duality is reflected in the functions, at least in the publicly visible areas, of the two buildings.

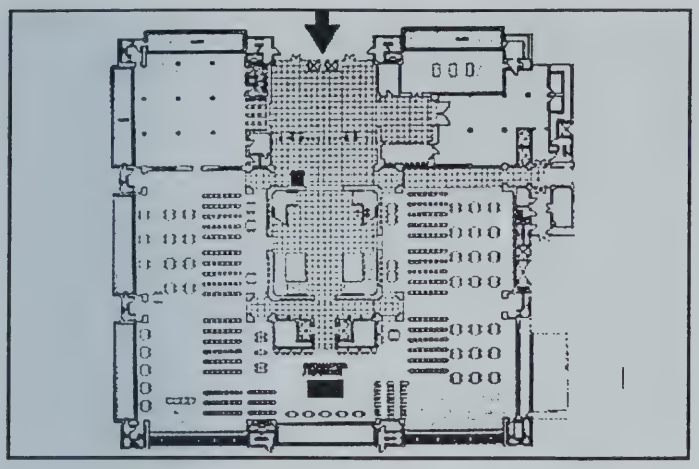
The McKim is operated as a research library (shown in beige) and the Johnson as a general circulating library (shown in green).



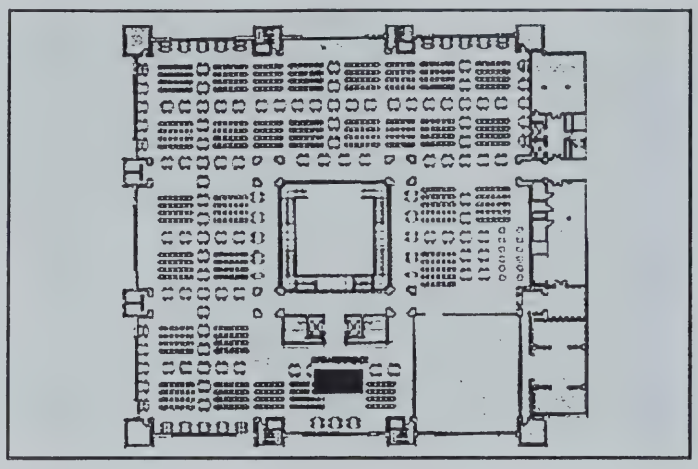
One of the initial problems we encountered with the currently planned layout of the two buildings was the lack of immediate and effective points of information. When entering the McKim a patron has only a small guard table to turn to for direction, and while the proposed Information Room would help, its placement away from the front door poses a problem.



Once upstairs, the dispersed nature of the information points on the Stack 4 floor also lacks the convenience of a clear point of reference for the wayward visitor.



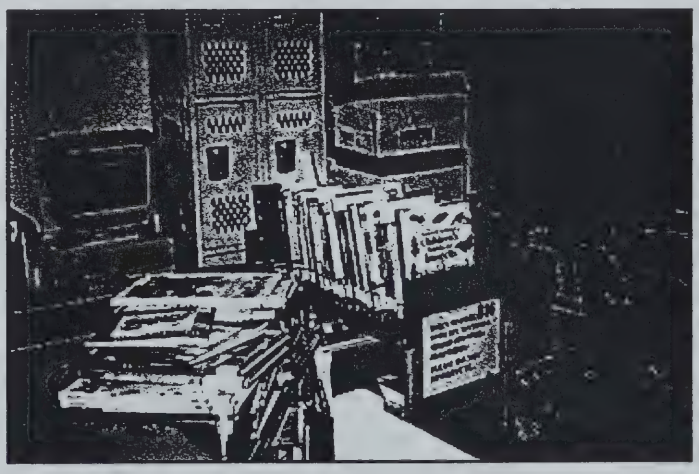
Down the block in the Johnson Building, the visitor finds an equally frustrating dilemma. They are faced with the large, open lobby and only a small information desk towards the rear of the space to help them. The larger information desk is located too far from the front entrance to be immediately useful.



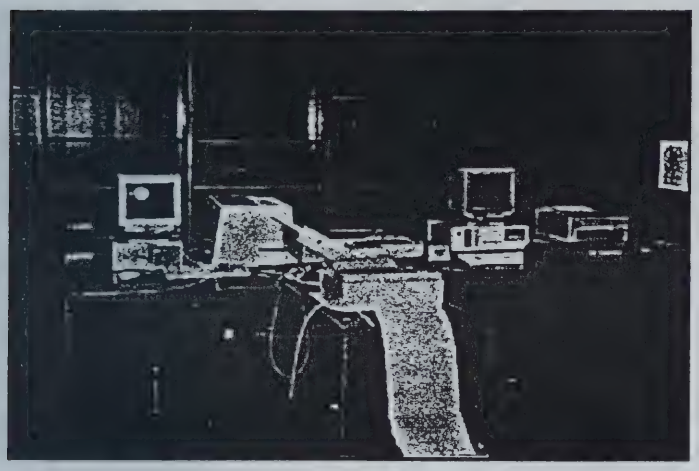
While the information desk on the second floor is placed in good proximity to both the stairs and the elevator, its location in relationship to the front door is also to far to be immediately useful for a visitor.

Other areas of improvement that the team discussed were the general use of space throughout the library.

In the Johnson building we noticed a mix of some spaces that were perhaps underutilized and overly spacious...



...and others which were literally jammed packed.



The lack of technology and skillful integration of equipment into the space was apparent.

As was a need for new lighting systems...

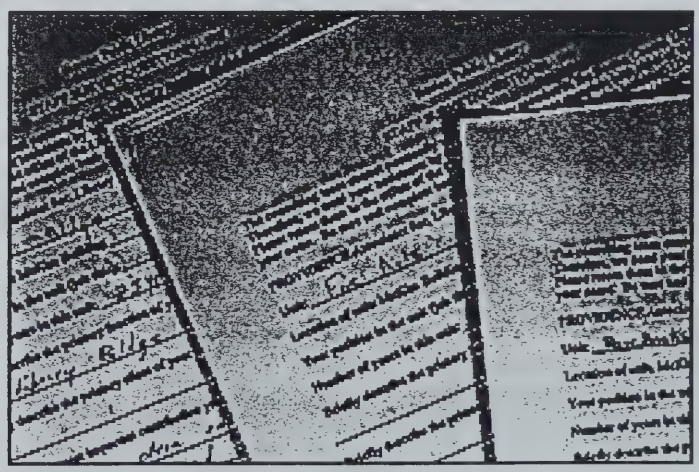
...mechanical and plumbing systems...

...and an overall assessment of the library's adherence with current Americans with Disabilities Act policies.

Immediately before the teams initial workshop visit, the library was damaged by floods in the basement of the McKim building, as well as areas of the Johnson building.

As the workshop process continued, it became clear that the basement spaces of the building would require careful thought and consideration so that no critical materials would be placed at risk, while the valuable floor space which these areas provide could still be utilized in some fashion.

In order to develop service and planning initiatives that would best improve the library and its functions, the team sought the input of the administration and staff through a series of workshops and questionnaires.



The questionnaires were distributed amongst the staff in order to encourage their full, open, and complete contribution to the process.

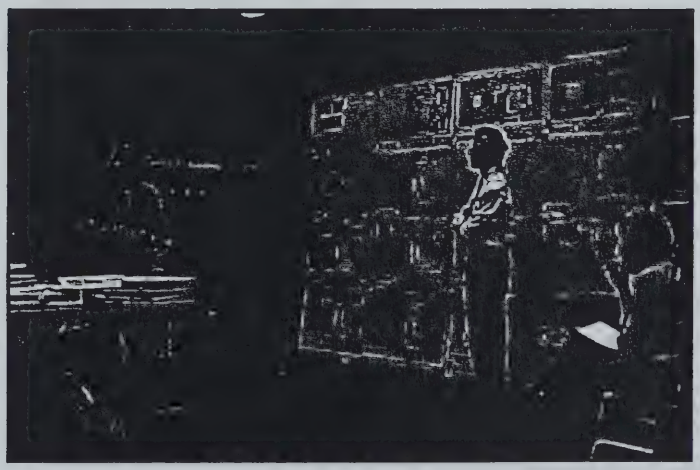
What special needs does your unit have (including those created by technology)?

- Need for More Workspace
- Better Lighting
- Improved Telephone System
- Better Furniture
- Improved Storage Conditions
- Environmental Concerns Including Air Conditioning
- Updated Equipment Such as Computers and Printers
- Suggested Technical Services Network
- Employee PCs
- Expanded Shelf Space for Collection - especially oversize items
- Upgrade PC Software to Windows 95

- Internet Connections
- Large Work Tables
- Technology Training for Staff
- Increased Security for Collection and Staff Patrons
- Library Policies - Written and Posted
- Slow, Clumsy, Inadequate Catalog Software
- More Timely Arrival of Newspapers and Increased Budget to Meet Demand
- More Meeting Room Space
- Suggestion of Secure Lockers for Patrons
- More Electrical Outlets
- Automated Catalog
- More Welcoming Entrance

These are some of the main points repeatedly mentioned in the responses.

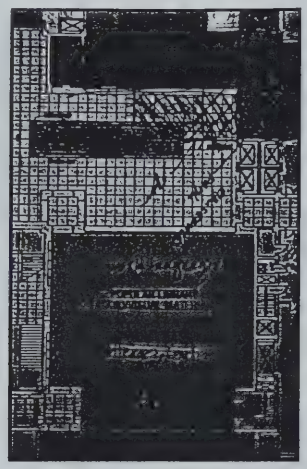
Workshops



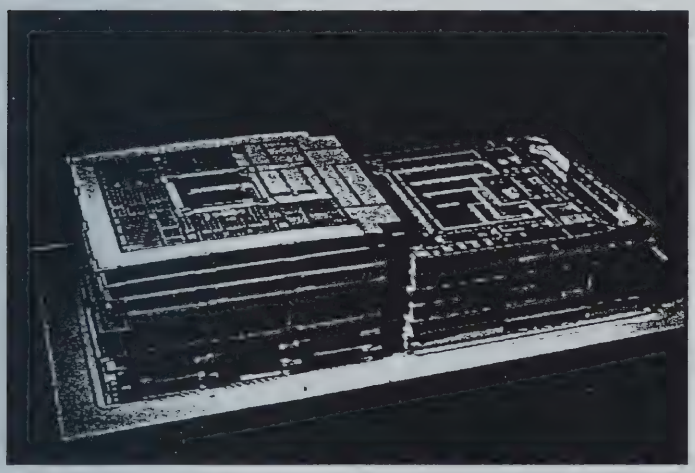
Two workshop sessions, each spanning a two day period, allowed the team to concentrate on many of the points stressed in the initial focus groups and questionnaires, as well as brought to light new and important concerns and ideas about the library.

The workshop process gave the administration and staff an opportunity to participate in the discussion about the planning options that the team presented.

By getting feedback from the staff in person, the study team could discuss a range of opinions, as well as investigate new concepts and ideas which had not been considered before.

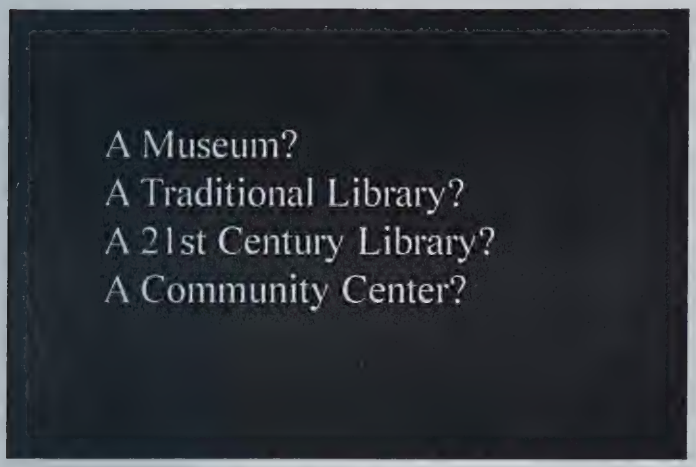


Changes in the use of an area were often recorded on the plans in the workshop, allowing for a tangible and immediate sense of participation for all those involved.



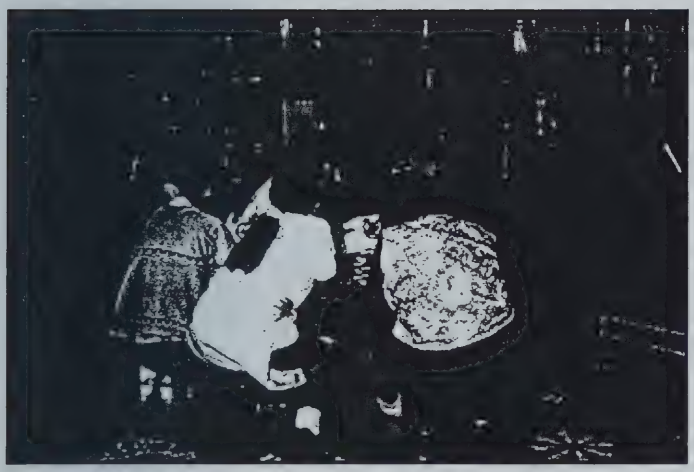
After the initial workshop, the team developed a new scheme, taking into consideration the workshop discussions and written comments from staff.

The scheme was brought to a second workshop and discussion and comments from administration and staff were generated.



The discussions often reflected four main ideas about the identity of the library.

Should the Boston Public Library maintain and expand its current exhibit space, adopting in part, a roll similar to that of a museum?



Should it focus on children and its roll in the community?

Should it function primarily as a traditional library?

Should it fully embrace the technological transformation which many other libraries, both new and old, are going through?

The workshops revealed that almost everyone felt strongly that there was a dire need for the introduction of new technologies and the services that accompany them.

Additionally, many people echoed the study team's sentiments that the library should expand its services and facilities for the community at large...

...and specifically for children.

Community Initiative

In order to address these many issues, the study developed its schemes with six initiatives in mind.

A Community Initiative that enables the library become a more exciting and welcoming place for the public.

Such an initiative would include expanded exhibit, lecture, meeting and children's spaces and services.

Technology Initiative

A Technology Initiative that introduces new technologies for both the patrons and staff.

This would include a complete overhaul of the current technologies in the library, introduction of new computer areas, full electronic reference resources, digital conversion and reproduction technologies, and new multi-media collection with audio/visual equipment.

Enterprise Initiative

An Enterprise Initiative that will bring desired services to the library, create a new draw, and introduce an additional revenue stream.

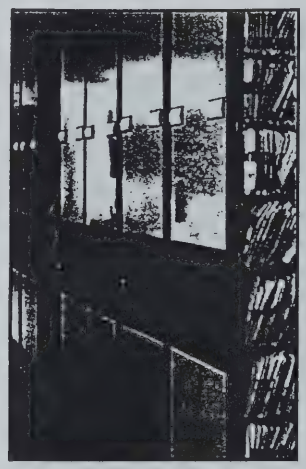
The inclusion of a small cafe, for example, will contribute to the experience of the library as a comfortable place to visit and spend time in.

Processing Initiative

A Processing Initiative which could be executed in a single, concise effort in order to account for all the unprocessed material in the library.

It was often discussed that such an initiative would be made all the more possible when thought of in conjunction with the Technology Initiative. New technologies will quickly facilitate the accounting and cataloging of unprocessed materials.

Off-Site Initiative



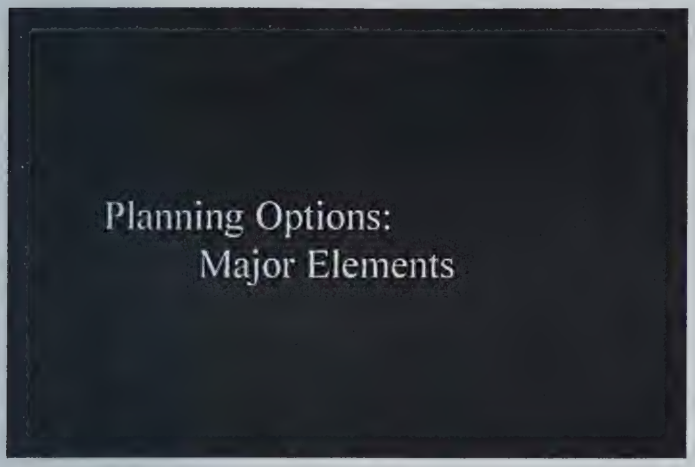
An Off-Site Initiative will give the library the breathing room it needs to better service the materials it has now, as well as begin to address the inevitable growth of many collections.

Such an off-site facility, would dramatically improve conditions in the library by efficiently housing materials in ways that might not be possible or desirable in the main branch.

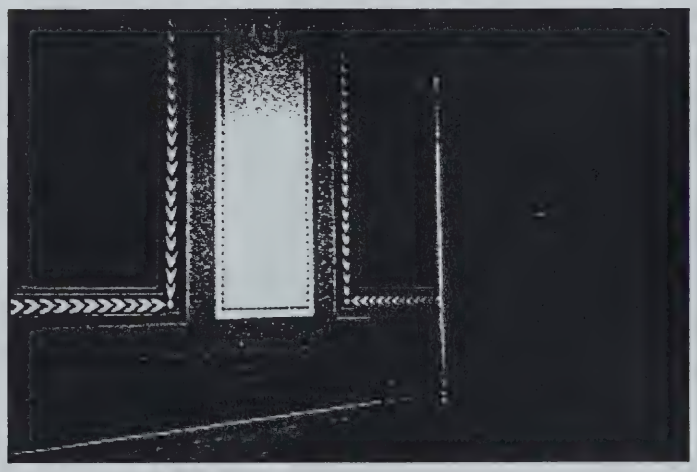
Development Initiative

A Development Initiative addresses the need to fund all these improvements and modifications.

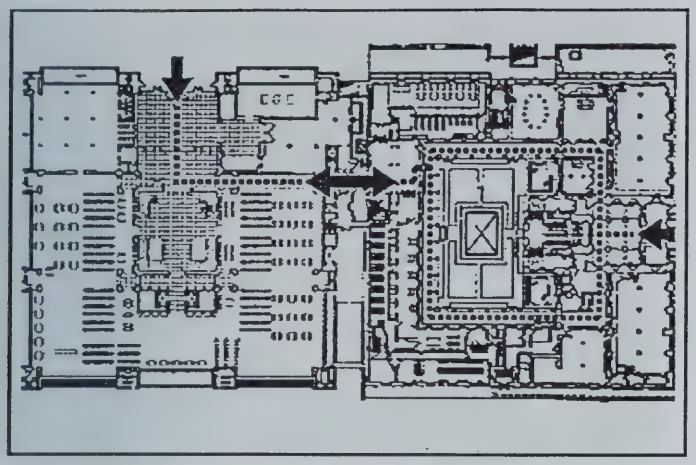
By dividing up the different needs of the library and categorizing the types of improvements that should be made into initiatives, there is the ability to seek funding for individual improvement packages.



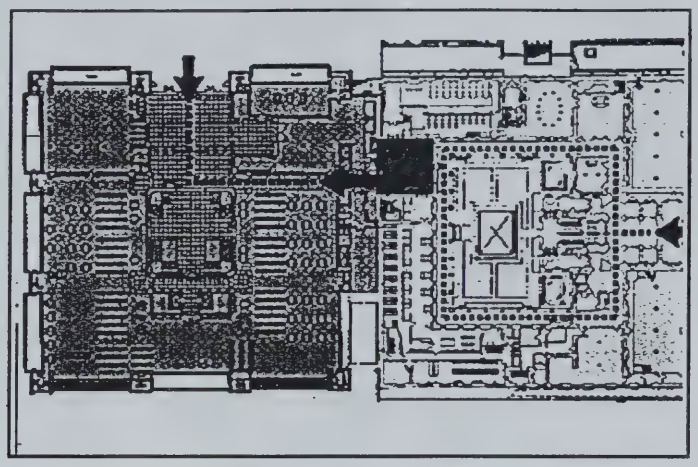
Based on these initiatives and issues, the study team developed different options. The developed schemes kept in mind certain factors about the existing condition of the buildings and the current renovations, as well as incorporating various goals and opportunities.



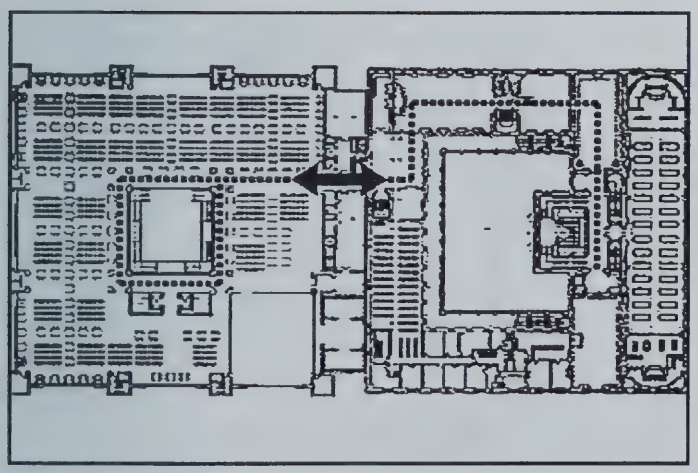
One goal was to maintain, as much as possible, the extensive renovation work that has already gone into the McKim.

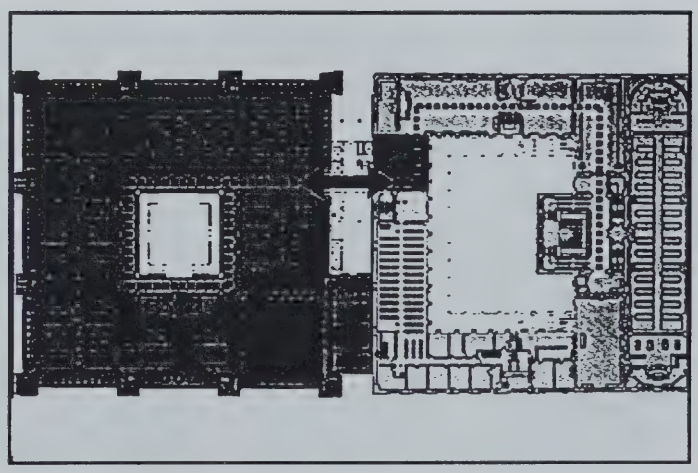


Other existing conditions which the team sought to maintain and enhance were the various connections between the McKim and the Johnson building.



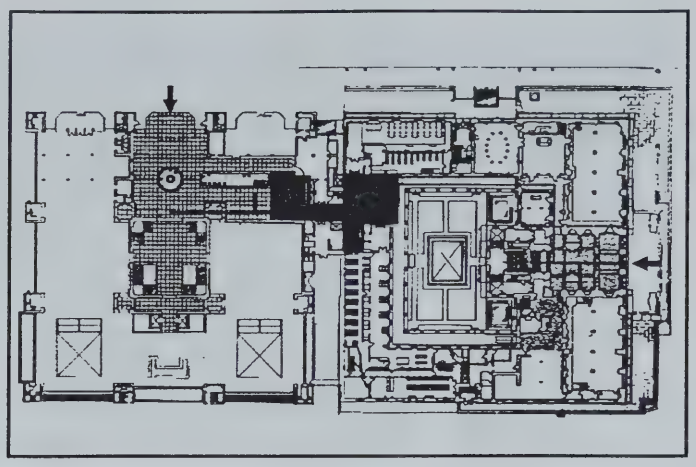
At both the ground floor through the new Northwest corridor...



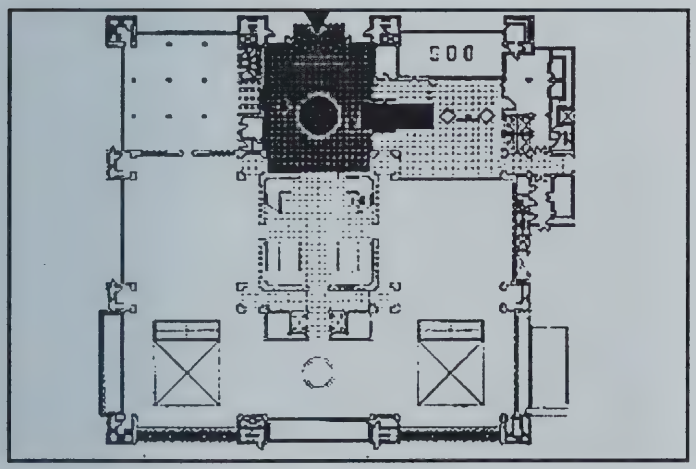


and on the second floor.

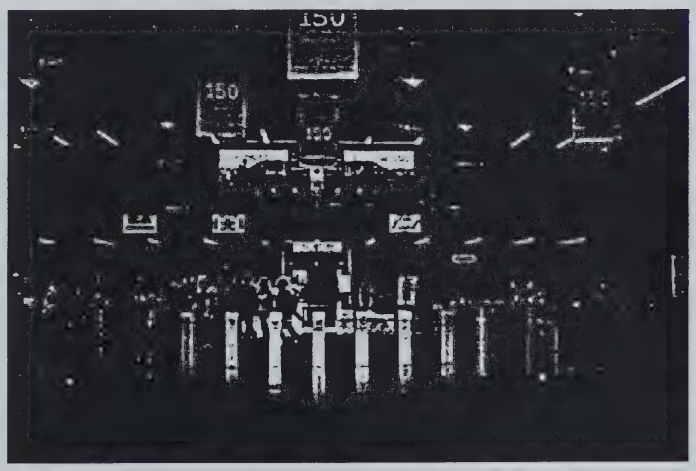
Keeping the connection at the ground floor in mind, and the lack of information points for visitors when they enter the library discussed earlier, the team developed a series of improvements to the front door and lobbies of the two buildings.

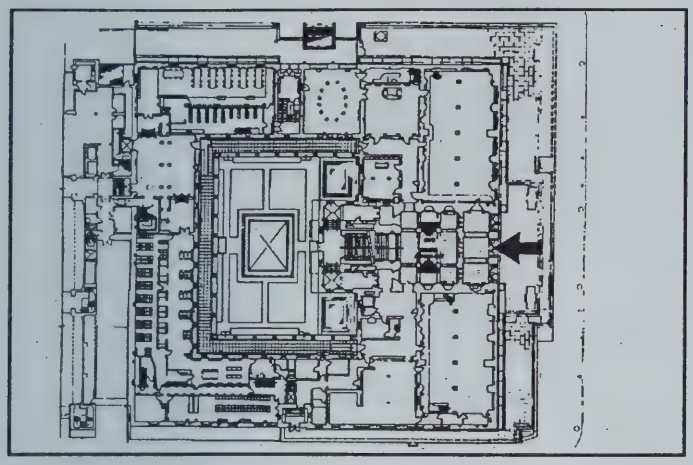


By expanding the interstitial space which the Northwest Corridor serves as, into the Johnson Building, a lobby node is created that truly joins the two buildings, both horizontally and vertically.



When the visitor first arrives they will be immediately greeted by a large information desk. Traffic will flow in on one side and out on the other, providing a secure entrance and exit as well as facilitating the information seeking and check out processes.



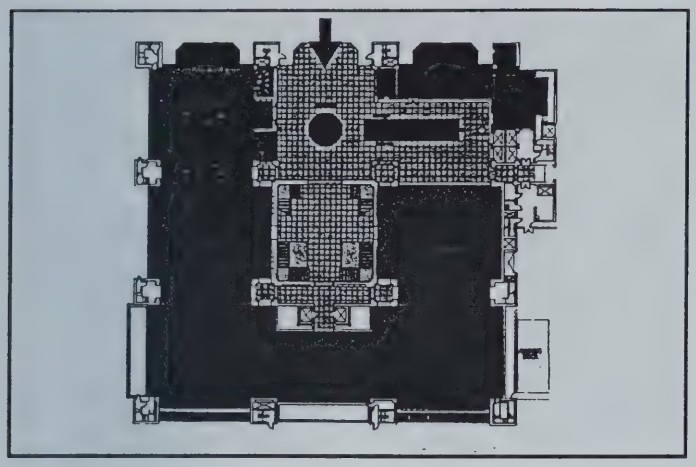


In the McKim Building new information and guard/check-out desks will be incorporated into the lobby.

Without compromising the beauty of the historic space, the desks will provide direction to the many visitors to the building who have come to tour and view exhibits, and service patrons who may not want to walk back to the Johnson to check a book they may have brought into the McKim.

The creation of a Popular Library which features only the most current and popular circulating materials will create a significant draw for patrons.

Other media, such as popular video and audio materials, will also be available.



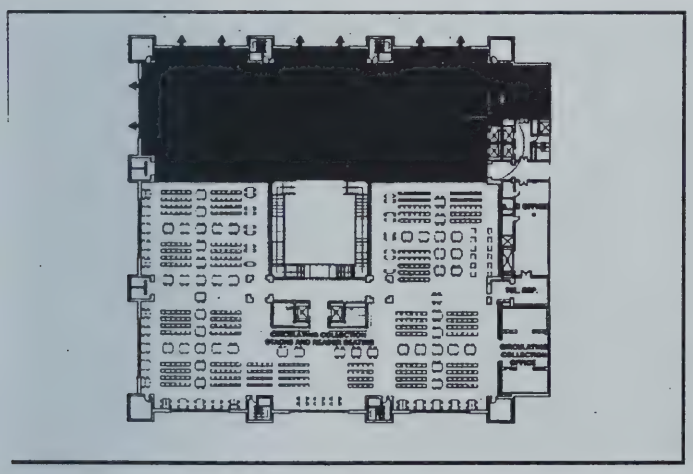
The Popular Library will be on the Ground Floor of the Johnson Building in order to draw patrons into the library.

It will provide an exciting and comfortable environment, which will add to the sensation that the library is a place to experience and spend time in.

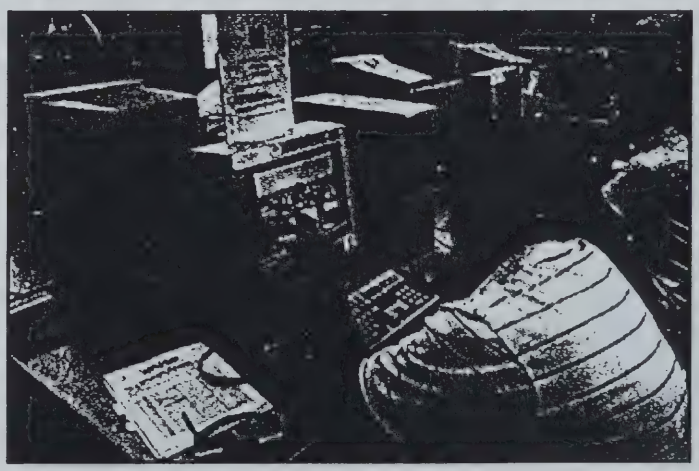
Enhanced children's areas will also contribute to the sense of the library as a place to feel comfortable and inhabit.

As reference activities become increasingly electronically based, the need for a new type of technology based reference center is apparent.

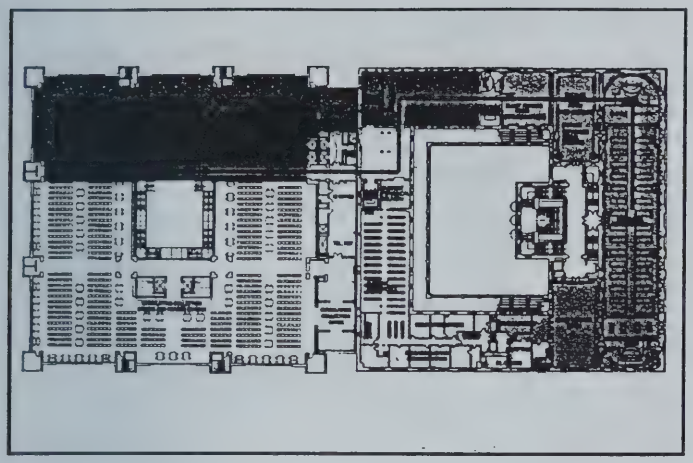
The largest use of such information technology will be on the second floor of the Johnson Building in a multi-function space called the Information Common (IC) that will primarily serve as the new Main Reference Center.



In addition to reference and other functions, the areas of the IC with windows will serve as reader seating.



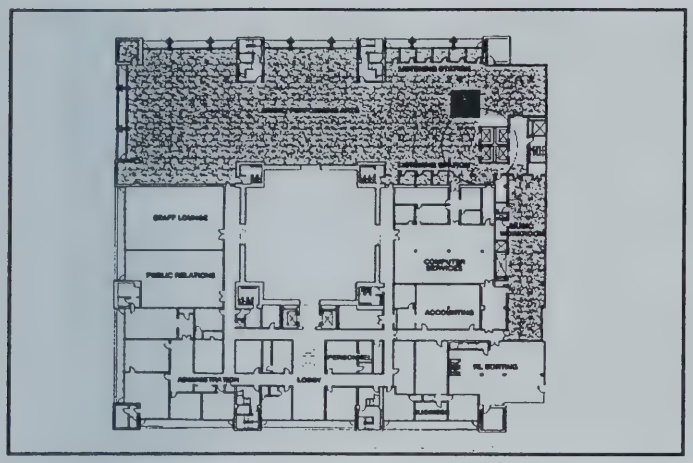
As the main location of computer terminals in the library, the IC will also provide Internet access.



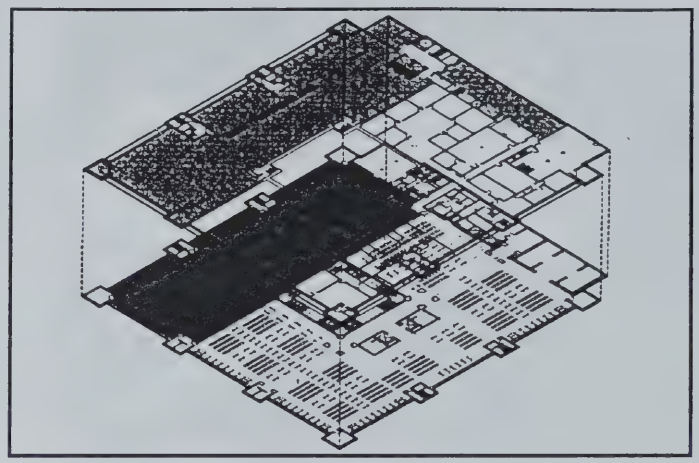
Its location on the second floor of the Johnson Building along Boylston, coupled with a new elevator core and its easy access from the McKim Bates Hall floor, will make the Information Common the main reference source for the Central Library Complex.

This new multi-media facility located on the third floor of the Johnson Building will serve many functions.

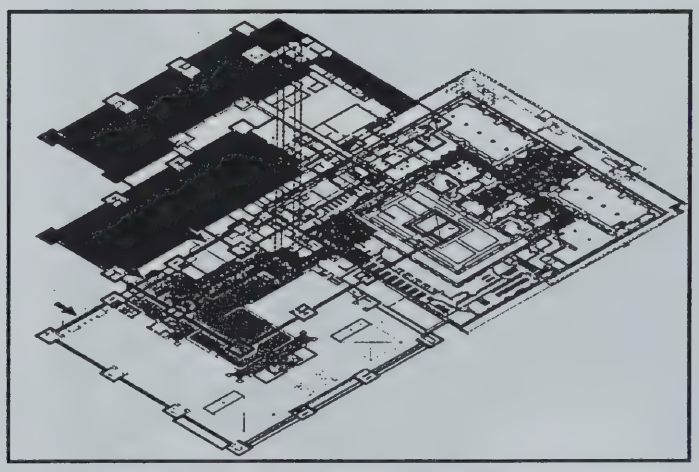
Patrons will be able to use records, audiocassettes and CD's, CD-ROM's, videotapes, and the Internet to listen and view music and performing arts programs.



Much like IC below it, the new Music and Performing Arts Center will provide study space well located with windows.

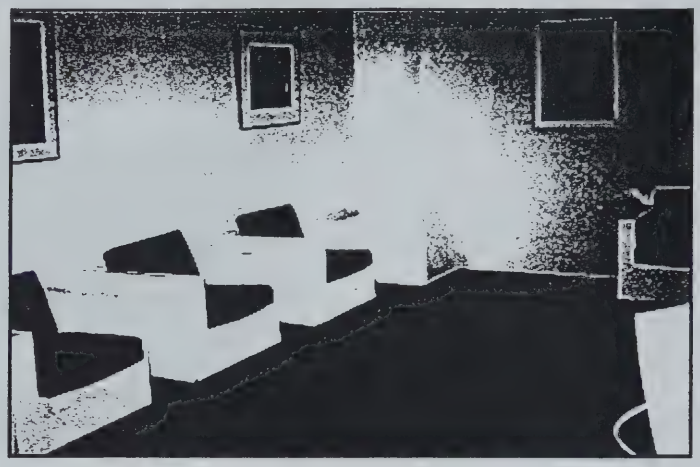


Its location immediately above the Information Common will create a "technology zone" on the Boylston side of the Johnson Building easily accessible from the lobby and the IC by the new elevators.

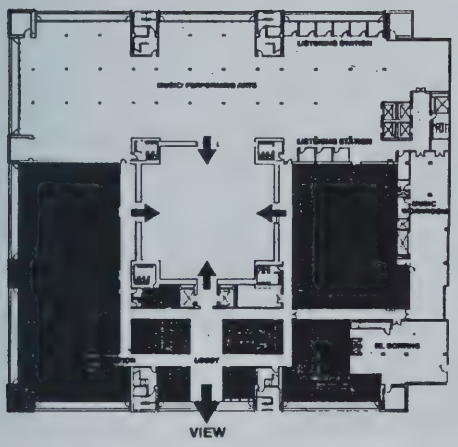


Both of these areas will be highly accessible from the new public elevators in the expanded Johnson lobby. These new hi-tech areas will develop a new image for the library as a state-of-the-art resource for users

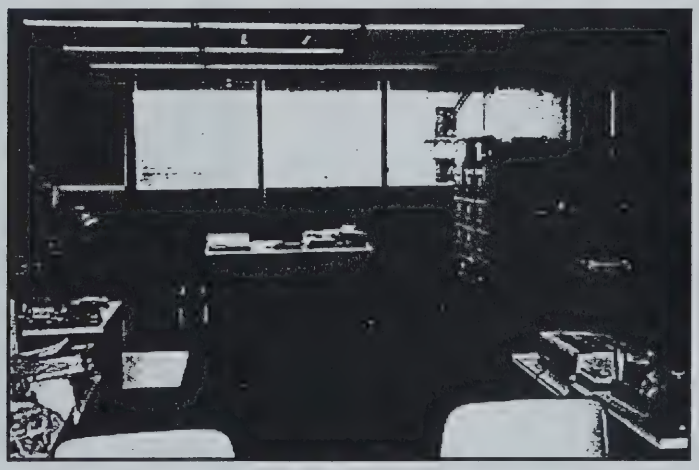
The vertical circulation will also play a key roll in moving people between spaces of the entire facility.



Significant improvements to the third floor of the Johnson Building will be made in the Administrative Area.



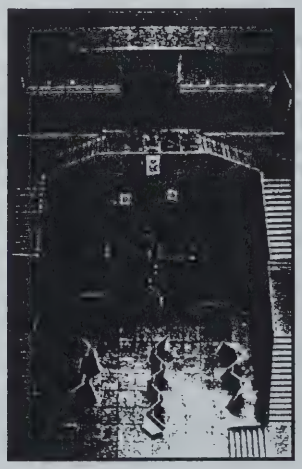
New window openings in the wall which surround the Great Hall, will dramatically improve the quality of spaces on the floor.



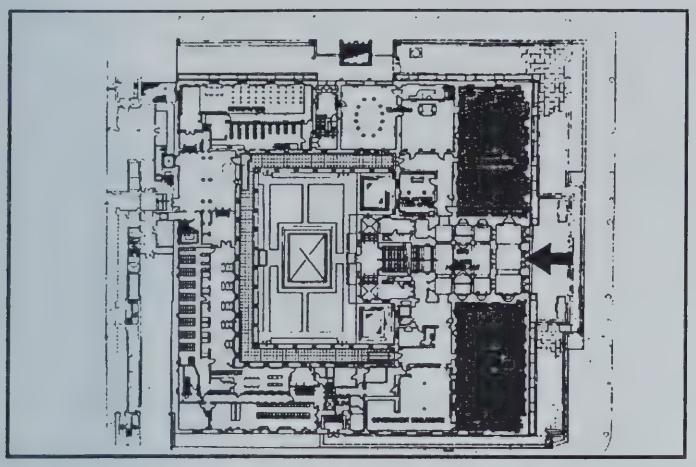
As will the opening up of a direct line of sight to an exterior window from the elevator lobby.

Numerous people come to visit the library everyday for reasons other than to check out a book. It is a popular attraction for tourists, art classes and other groups interested in the building itself.

By creating exhibit space to display elements of the research collection that the average user might never see, the library again enhances its function as a place to experience and spend time in.

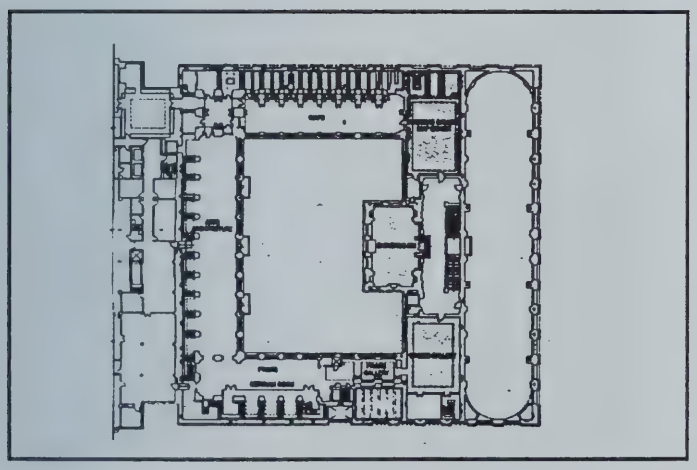


Enhancements to certain of the existing exhibit space will also be introduced. Areas such as the Great Hall in the Johnson Building have been discussed as excellent places for sculpture or other art work.

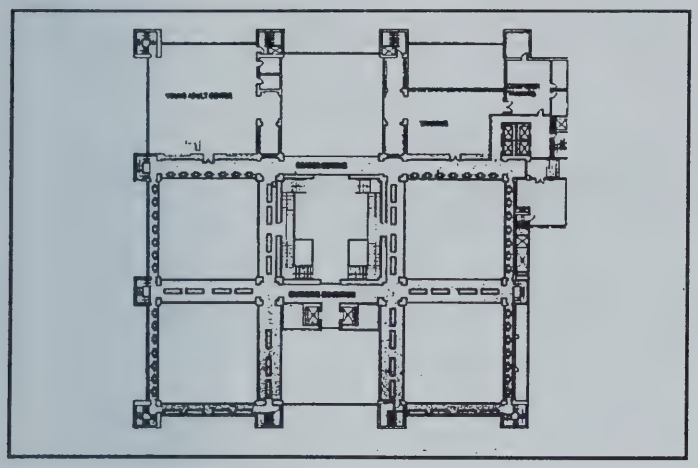


The intent is to make places for people to go when they arrive at the library, as well as spaces that showcase the library itself.

Self-guided audio tours may be distributed to visitors to guide them through the building and its art work.



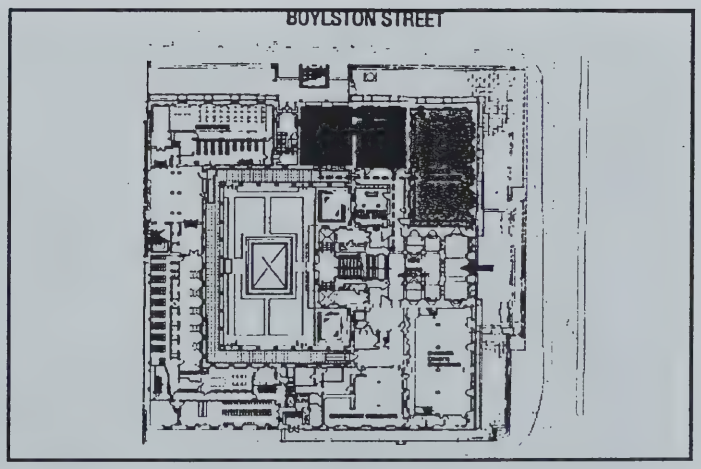
A series of exhibit rooms on the Special Libraries Floor of the McKim will create a draw for people to experience the entire building as well as provide an historic setting for the display of rare and special collections.



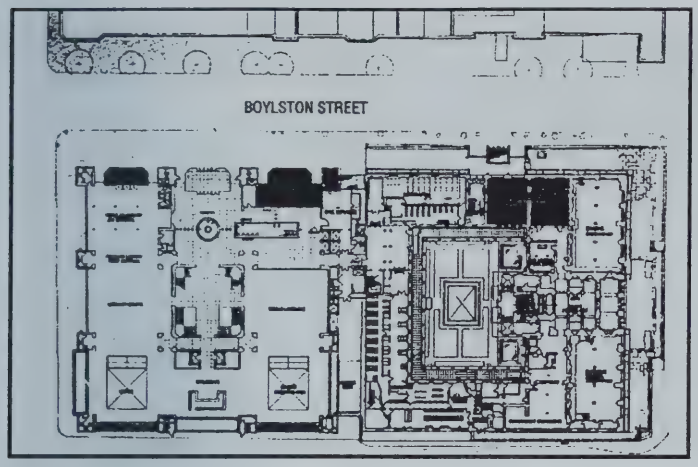
In the Johnson Building the Mezzanine level will be configured primarily for exhibition cases and displays.

Enterprise Areas

As mentioned in the discussion of an Enterprise Initiative, one of the many ways to enhance people's experience of the library, and to promote its use by all types of patrons, is the introduction of services which typically may not seem to fall under the traditional operations of a library

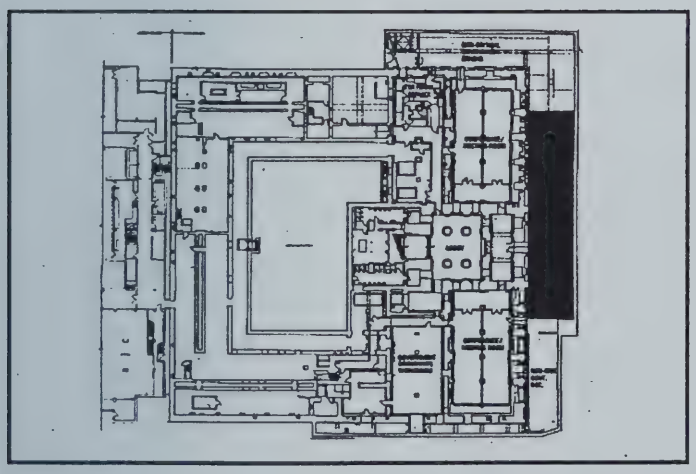


An example of an enterprise space planned for the McKim is the Tea Room. Here staff and patrons will be able to order food and eat in a dinning facility that exemplifies the beauty of the McKim building.



Most of the enterprise spaces will be located along the street frontage in order to take advantage of the street traffic.

A small café at the "front door" of the Popular Library, will serve both the patrons from in the library as well as passer-bys. It will consist of a small coffee bar, such as a Starbucks, and some table seating that will visually flow into the Popular Library beyond.



Among the many comments the study team noted in its workshop process was a description of the current difficulty in reproducing color or large materials for patrons. The Digital Conversion and Reproduction Technologies Center, to be located in the Basement of the McKim, will address this issue.

Additionally, it will serve a crucial roll in the digitizing of the library's collections so that they might be accessed by patrons at the various workstations in the complex or even at home or across the country.

- Define Goals Objectives
- Staff and Service Impacts
- BPL Priorities

- Cost Estimating
- Funding Sources
- Phasing

Universal™
office products

Report Binder
Stock No./Color

80571	Black
80572	Lt. Blue
80573	Dk. Blue
80578	Rust
80579	Exec. Red

MADE IN THE USA